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DETERMINATION OF THE CLASS REPETITION RATES FOR 2011 COHORT OF PUPILS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN TRANSZOIA WEST, KENYA

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Abstract:
Education remains the most critical component for economic development and social progression in any society. Governments, policymakers and civil societies have emphasised the need to invest more in education and ensure that systems of education are efficiently managed. The internal efficiency of a school is the capacity of the school system to produce graduates in the best way, without repetitions and dropouts, to ensure that resources invested in the learner do not go to waste. Class repetition and pupil absenteeism are some of the internal inefficiency issues in public primary schools of Trans Nzoia West. Comparing pupil lesson attendance rates in public primary schools in Sub-Counties of Trans Nzoia, pupil lesson attendance was lowest in Trans Nzoia West Sub County. The purpose of the study was to determine the internal efficiency of education as reflected in the repetition rates of the 2011 cohort in public primary schools in Trans Nzoia West Sub-County. The specific objectives of the study were to determine the class repetition rate in the 2011 cohort Transzoia West Sub-County. The study was anchored on the transactional-ecological model of the development framework. The study used a descriptive research design. The study population was 4336 class 8 pupils, 71 class 8 teachers, 57 head teachers and 1 Sub-County Director of Education (SCDE). Saturated sampling was used to select 52 head teachers, 66 class 8 teachers and 1 SCDE, while 404 class 8 pupils from the 5 zones of Trans Nzoia West Sub-County were selected using stratified random sampling. The reliability of the instruments was determined through a pilot study carried out with 1 head teacher, 1 class 8 teacher and 7 class 8 pupils per zone

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in the 5 zones to pre-test the instruments. It was calculated using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation coefficient. This resulted in a correlation coefficient of r= 0.760, which validated the reliability of the questionnaires used. The study revealed that teachers considered poor parental support as the most crucial factor leading to pupils repeating classes. It was also established that early pregnancies led to non-completion of primary-level education by girls. The study recommends that the school administration should abolish forced class repetition from both parents and teachers in primary schools. The school administration should instead implement early intervention programs targeted at pupils showing signs of low academic performance or risk of repetition. These programs could include additional tutoring, mentoring, or personalized learning plans to address individual pupil needs and prevent repetition.

Keywords: cohort; educational wastage; repetition rate; completion rate

1. Introduction

The achievement of Universal Primary Education (UPE) is expected to have positive spillover effects on all the other Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The Kenya Vision 2030 underscores the importance of Education in ensuring relevant human and social capital. The provisions of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 guarantee all children the right to free and compulsory primary education. In addition, the Government developed the Sessional Paper No.14 in 2012 on Education and Training and the Basic Education Act, 2013, which laid a legal framework for achieving Universal Primary Education. The universal goal of primary education emphasizes both access and completion of quality primary education. This calls for a perfectly efficient system whereby, technically, all students admitted into the first class would be able to complete the full course of an eight-year primary education (Taddele 2008, p. 166).

The Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2016) indicates that globally, the gross intake rate into the final class of primary school was 90% in 2014. There was a low of 67% in low-income countries, ranging up to 98% in high-income countries. The rate exceeded 90% in all regions except sub-Saharan Africa, where it was 69%. In 2008-2014, the primary completion rate was 51% in low-income countries, 84% in lower middle-income countries and 92% in upper middle-income countries (UNESCO, 2016) report.

Over the last 14 years, continued implementation of the FPE program has led to an increase in enrolment from 8.78 million pupils in 2014 to 8.83 million pupils in 2015, with a projection of 9.3 million pupils in 2018/2019. Capitation increased to Kshs 8.9B in 2012/2013 and further to Kshs 9.0 B in 2013/2014. During the financial year 2014/2015, Kshs 12.07B was disbursed to cater for 8.9 million pupils in 21302 public primary schools. In the financial year 2015/2016, however, the enrolment reported was 8.8 million pupils in 21767 public primary schools. A total of Kshs 12.63 billion was disbursed (Republic of Kenya, 2016).

Despite all these efforts, Kenya's education sector has faced a number of challenges. One major challenge is waste in the education system. It refers to the failure of a system to provide universal education, failure to recruit and hold children into a system, failure to set appropriate objectives and inefficiency in the achievement of the objectives (Brimmer & Pauli, 1971). A study by the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA, 2015) regarding wastage in education in Kenya noted that while 1.3 million children joined primary schools at the start of free primary education in 2003, only 875300 pupils made it to standard 8. This represents 32.7% dropout.

Internal efficiency is the capacity of the education system to produce graduates at any level in the best way, which is without repetition and dropouts. A study by Egen & Kauchack (2008) regarding wastage in education concluded that when a school is not able to achieve its objectives, then the school is internally inefficient. Wastage may occur between classes, that is, those who repeat the classes and those who drop out of the system between the classes. Okwach & Odipo (2007) noted that the participation of pupils in child labour forces pupils out of school. These pupils are not able to complete the school cycle, hence affecting the school's internal efficiency.

Chimakati (2012), in his study on the internal efficiency of public primary schools in Ikolomani South Division, Kakamega County, found out that public primary schools in Ikolomani South Division had a low internal efficiency of average years per graduate of 10.497, which translates to an additional 2.497 years needed to produce graduates that require an optimal 8 years of the primary education course. A coefficient of efficiency of 0.762 or 76.2%, which was at variance with the UNESCO recommended co-efficient of efficiency of over 0.90 or 90% for internally efficient education systems, was established. A survey conducted by the National Assessment for Monitoring Learning Achievement (NASMLA) in 2016 reported on the percentage of pupils who have repeated a class per region as follows;

Table 1: Distribution of repeaters in eight Regions of Kenya

Regions	Coast	Central	Eastern	Nairobi	Rift Valley	Western	Nyanza	North Eastern	National
% Repeaters	58.0	55.1	67.4	27.6	56.7	60.0	68.6	24.3	59.8

Source: NASMLA Report (2016).

From Table 1 above, the report shows that nationally, 59.8% of the pupils have repeated a class, though there are regional variations. Grade repetition is associated with inefficiency and inequity in the provision of education. Efficiency losses are in the costs of repetition (UNESCO, 2012). The provision of equal opportunities in education, as well as ensuring the number of pupils who enrol on a cycle complete it, has been the concern of many governments worldwide (Kimatu, 2007).

Table 2 provides information about pupil lesson attendance in Trans Nzoia Sub County during term 3, 2017.

Table 2: Pupil Lesson Attendance in Term 3 in 2017

S/No	Sub-County	Percent of Pupil School Lesson Attendance (%)
1	Kwanza	71
2	Endebess	70
3	Kiminini	75
4	Trans Nzoia West	67
5	Trans Nzoia East	73
Average		**71.2**

Source: Teacher Service Commission Trans Nzoia County, 2017.

From Table 2, the percentage of pupils who attended a lesson in Trans-Nzoia West in Term 3, 2017, was lower than that of other sub-counties, followed by Endebess, Kwanza, Trans Nzoia East and Kiminini in that order. Pupil absenteeism leads to inefficient utilisation of teaching-learning time, which significantly contributes to the rise in school dropout and repetition. The present study was designed to generate information on grade repetition rates in 2011 cohorts of public primary schools in Trans Nzoia West Sub-County.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The number of pupils at entry progressively reduces in most public primary schools as learners' cohort moves on to the next grade. This reduction also happens to primary schools in Trans Nzoia West for a number of reasons that are contrary to the government's plan. Reports from NASMLA in 2016 indicated that the overall problem was with the poor internal efficiency approaches. This could also depend on factors that determine internal efficiency, such as school factors, family background, socio-cultural factors, and socio-economic factors. It was on the basis of this understanding and from studies conducted locally, regionally and internationally that this study sought to determine the internal efficiency of education in public primary schools in Trans Nzoia West Sub-County, Kenya, as reflected by repetition rates.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the internal efficiency of education as reflected in Repetition rates of public primary schools in Trans Nzoia West Sub-County, Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objective of the study was to determine the class repetition rates for the 2011 cohort of pupils in Trans Nzoia West public primary schools.

2. Brief Literature Review

Research on school wastage has shown that repetition and drop-out rates are related to educational, political and economic factors (Levy, 1971). Eisenman (1997) reported that repetition rates in developing countries are often relatively high. Sub-Saharan African

countries recorded the highest rate, with about 22% of primary students and 21% of secondary students repeating a class each year.

Studies regarding class repetitions in countries such as Brazil (Gomes, Joao & Hanusheck, 1994), Lebanon (El-Hassn, 1998) and Pakistan (King, Orazem & Pterno, 1999) have found that repetition is most frequent in rural areas. The low achievement patterns and class repeaters tend to be associated with poverty indicators at both the school and family levels. Schools in poor, remote rural areas often feature limitations: short school years, frequent teacher absence, limited supplies, poorly qualified teachers, large classes, multiple class classes and double shifts.

Within any given school, students from the poorest families are more at risk of repetition because their home backgrounds leave them less prepared to succeed and because they are likely to miss more school days because of serious health or nutrition problems or because their families require them to assume child care or work responsibilities. Simmons (1974) suggests that wastage rates are an important dimension of school efficiency.

High levels of class repetition can lead to increased class sizes and classroom management problems due to significant age differences among students in the same classroom. Holmes and Mathews (1984) found that repeated students performed 0.44 of a standard deviation below promoted counterparts on various measures of academic achievement. One of the reasons they cited for the failure of repeated students to improve academic achievement is that students are often repeated in programs that were not beneficial to them in the first year. Reinhardt (1980) did research on kindergarten pupils and found out that low-achieving pupils who were promoted to first class but were given a special instructional program performed at higher levels than pupils given conventional instruction or pupils who were placed in a transitional room with exceptional instruction.

Those who consider repetition to be a waste implicitly assume that there is a normal rate of acquisition of knowledge and that school cycles have been building up so that the year programs correspond to what can generally be assimilated (Kasembeli, 2004). Advocates of this school of thought support their arguments with various research findings, which, through data analysis, conclude that, first, repetition does not seem to increase significantly the level of school achievement or the amount of learning by repeaters; second, repetition seems to have a negative psychological effect because it tends to lower the pupil's self-esteem, makes their attitudes towards learning less optimistic and damages peer relations (Holmes & Mathews, 1984, p. 142).

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study made use of the descriptive survey design utilizing both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Descriptive survey design was used in the study since it allowed the researcher to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the

purpose of clarification (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). According to Orodho (2004) and Borg and Gall (1983), descriptive survey research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of a phenomenon and, whenever possible, draw valid conclusions from the facts discovered. Descriptive survey research gives statistical information about aspects of education. The design has been chosen because the study involves a broad category of stakeholders in education.

3.2 Study Locale

The study was carried out in public primary schools in Trans Nzoia West Sub-County. Trans Nzoia West is one of the 5 sub-counties in Trans Nzoia-County. The sub-County borders Kiminini Sub-County (recently created) to the east, Kwanza Sub-County to the north, Mt Elgon to the northwest, and Bungoma County to the west. Kitale town, which is the capital, is on the eastern side of the Sub - County and is 380km northwest of Nairobi. It has a surface area of approximately 324 km^2.

3.4 Study Population

The target population for a survey is the entire set of units for which the survey data are to be used to make inferences (Jacobs *et al.*, 2006). In the Sub-County, there are 57 registered public primary schools, 57 head teachers, 71 class eight teachers, 4336 class eight pupils, one Sub-County Director of Education and one sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards officer that formed the researcher's target population (Trans Nzoia west Sub-County (EMIS, 2018).

3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedures

The respondents for the study were the Sub-County Director of Education, public primary school head teachers, class 8 teachers and class 8 pupils sampled across the entire Trans-Nzoia West Sub-County. This study adopted Yamane's (1967; cited in Israel, 2013) formula since it was simple to understand and applied when calculating the sample size.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)2} \quad \text{..... 3.1}$$

Where
n is the sample size,
N is the population size, and
e is the level of precision (0.05).

Therefore:

$n = 4336/1+ 4336(0.05)^2 = 366.21$

n = 367 pupils

Adjustments done for no response = 10% of 367 = 36.7 = 37
Therefore, n = 367 + 37
n = 404 pupils

Table 3 presents the distribution of the sample size.

Table 3: Sample size distribution

Zones	Pupils' enrolment	Proportion of pupils to be sampled	No. of schools	No. of head teachers to be sampled	Proportion of class teachers to be sampled
Central	572	53	6	5	13
Saboti	1571	146	20	19	22
Kinyoro	1058	99	15	14	14
Grassland	509	47	7	6	6
Bondeni	626	59	9	8	11
Total	**4336**	**404**	**57**	**52**	**66**

In obtaining the number of pupils to be sampled per zone, proportional parts were used.

Example of Central zone proportion = 572 * 404 / 4336 = 53

The number of head teachers to be sampled per zone was obtained by subtracting one from the total number of head teachers per zone. Since one headteacher was used per zone during the piloting stage. Hence,

Total = 57 - 5 = 52

In determining the number of class teachers, the number of schools per zone was considered not on proportional parts but the actual number sampled per zone plus the number of class teachers existing in a given school depending on the number of streams in that school.

3.6 Instruments of Data Collection

This study used questionnaires and a document analysis guide. For head teachers, class 8 teachers, Sub-County director of education and class 8 pupils. Documents such as class registers and EMIS records were analysed. Four questionnaires have been formulated and were administered to the respondents sampled for the study by the researcher.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

3.7.1 Validity of Instruments

To enhance face and content validity, the questionnaires were presented by experts in educational research from the Department of Educational Management and Foundations, Maseno University. They examined and made necessary adjustments to the items of the questionnaires.

3.7.2 Reliability of Instruments

The reliability of an instrument is the degree to which it yields consistent results after repeated trials. The researcher used the test- re-test technique. The researcher calculated the reliability using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation coefficient. The headteacher's reliability test results had an r-value of 0.820, the reliability test results of the class 8 teachers had an r-value of 0.743, and the reliability results of the class 8 pupils had an r-value of 0.716. This resulted in a mean correlation coefficient of r = 0.760. The questionnaires were then considered reliable (Orodho, 2004).

3.8 Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the information collected (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). After data collection, the responses from the questionnaire were coded and then entered into the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) Version 25.0 program for analysis. Data on enrollment was computed by applying the respective notations for grade repetition, grade survival, and completion rates for the 2011 cohort. The analyzed data was then presented in the form of tables and pie charts.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Teachers' Response to Causes of Pupils' Repetition among 2011 Cohort of Pupils

Table 4 presents the teachers' responses to the causes of pupils' class repetition. Table 4 shows that 6.0% of the teachers agreed that absenteeism of teachers causes pupils to repeat the class, 9.1% were not sure, and 84.9% of the teachers disagreed with this statement. The mean value for this statement was 1.67, implying that the teachers disagreed with the statement. Further, 72.7% of the teachers agreed that poor parental support for pupils causes pupils to repeat the class, 24.2% tend to agree, and 3.0% disagreed, as shown with a mean of 4.06. This implies that the teachers agreed with this statement since the mean value was above the average of 2.5.

According to the findings, 50% of the teachers agreed that girls' pregnancies cause girls to repeat the class, 25.8% were not certain, and the remaining 24.3% disagreed with a mean of 3.47. It was also clear that 18.2% of the respondents agreed that poor teacher/ pupil relationships cause pupils to repeat the class, 24.2% agreed, and 57.6% disagreed. This statement had a mean of 2.30, implying that the teachers disagreed with the statement. The results further revealed that 9.1% of the teachers agreed that failure to pay required school levies is the primary cause of pupils to repeat the class, 6.1% were not sure, and 84.9% disagreed with the opinion. The mean value for this statement was 1.73, meaning that the teachers disagreed with the statement. The results in Table 4 also indicated that 9.1% of the teachers agreed that tough school regulations are the major cause for pupils to repeat the class, 18.2% were uncertain, and 72.7% disagreed, as shown with a mean of 1.94. Further, 30.3% of the teachers agreed that the sickness of pupils

contributes to pupils repeating the class, 31.8% agreed, and 37.9% disagreed. This statement had a mean value of 2.89, meaning that the teachers agreed with the statement.

Table 4: Teachers Response on Causes of Pupils Class Repetition (n = 66)

Statements		**SA**	**A**	**TA**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**
Absenteeism of teachers causes pupils to repeat the class	F	2	2	6	18	38	1.67
	%	3.0	3.0	9.1	27.3	57.6	
Poor parental support for pupils causes pupils to repeat the class	F	25	23	16	1	1	4.06
	%	37.9	34.8	24.2	1.5	1.5	
Girls pregnancies cause girls to repeat the class	F	18	15	17	12	4	3.47
	%	27.3	22.7	25.8	18.2	6.1	
Poor teacher/ pupil relationship causes pupils to repeat the class	F	5	7	16	13	25	**2.30**
	%	7.6	10.6	24.2	19.7	37.9	
Failure to pay required school levies is the major cause of pupils repeating the class	F	4	2	4	18	38	**1.73**
	%	6.1	3.0	6.1	27.3	57.6	
Strict school regulations are the major cause pupils to repeat the class	F	1	5	12	19	29	**1.94**
	%	1.5	7.6	18.2	28.8	43.9	
Sickness of pupils contributes to pupils to repeat the class	F	5	15	21	18	7	**2.89**
	%	7.6	22.7	31.8	27.3	10.6	
The lack of school feeding programs causes pupils to repeat the class	F	11	18	8	16	13	**2.97**
	%	16.7	27.3	12.1	24.2	19.7	
Non-participation of pupils in co-curriculum activities cause pupils to repeat the class	F	6	4	9	21	26	**2.14**
	%	9.1	6.1	13.6	31.8	39.4	
Paid casual work by pupils causes pupils to repeat the class	F	12	12	19	9	14	**2.98**
	%	18.2	18.2	28.8	13.6	21.2	
Grand Average Mean							**2.62**

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, TA-Tend to agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree, Des-descriptive.

It was also found that 44% of the teachers agreed that the lack of a school feeding programme causes pupils to repeat class, 12.1% were not sure, and 43.9% disagreed, as shown with a mean of 2.97, meaning the teachers agreed with the statement. In the statement that non-participation of pupils in co-curricular activities causes pupils to repeat class, 15.2% of the teachers agreed, 13.6% tended to agree, and 71.2% disagreed, with a mean of 2.14. This mean value showed that the teachers disagreed with the statement. Finally, 36.4% of the respondents agreed that paid casual work by pupils causes pupils to repeat class, 28.8% were not certain, and the remaining 34.8% disagreed.

From the above findings, it can be deduced that the responses for all the items on causes of pupils repeating the class were above the average mean of 2.5, as the overall mean of all the items was 2.62. This is because the highest was 4.06, which is above the average mean of 2.5 out of 5.0. From Table 4.1, it can be noted that the respondents agreed that poor parental support for pupils causes pupils to repeat class with a mean of 4.06. This shows that the teachers considered poor parental support as the most important factor leading to pupils repeating the grade, followed by those who indicated girls' pregnancies at 3.47.

The above findings are consistent with those of King, Orazem & Pterno (1999), who conducted a study regarding class repetitions in Pakistan, and their study established that repetition is most frequent in rural areas. The low achievement patterns and class repeaters tend to be associated with poverty indicators at both the school and family levels. Schools in poor, remote rural areas often feature limitations; short school years, frequent teacher absence; limited supplies, poorly qualified teachers; large classes; multiple classes and double shifts.

5. Headteachers' Response to Causes of Pupils' Class Repetition

The head teachers were also asked to indicate the causes of pupils' class repetition, and the findings are as follows:

Table 5: Headteachers' Response on Causes of Pupils Class Repetition (n=47)

Statements		SA	A	TA	D	SD	Mean
Absenteeism of teachers causes pupils to repeat the class	F	1	4	8	15	19	**2.00**
	%	2.1	8.5	17.0	31.9	40.4	
Poor parental support for pupils causes pupils to repeat the class	F	17	17	10	1	2	**3.98**
	%	36.2	36.2	21.3	2.1	4.3	
Girls' pregnancies cause girls to repeat class	F	22	15	8	0	2	**4.17**
	%	46.8	31.9	17.0	0.0	4.3	
Poor teacher/ pupil relationship causes pupils to repeat the class	F	5	11	10	14	7	**2.85**
	%	10.6	23.4	21.3	29.8	14.9	
Failure to pay required school levies is the primary cause of pupils to repeat the grade	F	2	3	7	15	20	**1.98**
	%	4.3	6.4	14.9	31.9	42.6	
Strict school regulations are the major cause of pupils repeating the class	F	2	2	11	18	14	**2.15**
	%	4.3	4.3	23.4	38.3	29.8	
Sickness of pupils contributes to pupils to repeat the class	F	4	12	18	10	3	**3.09**
	%	8.5	25.5	38.3	21.3	6.4	
The lack of a school feeding programme causes pupils to repeat the class	F	6	9	18	11	3	**3.09**
	%	12.8	19.1	38.3	23.4	6.4	
Non-participation of pupils in co-curriculum activities causes pupils to repeat the class	F	0	4	8	23	12	**2.09**
	%	0.0	8.5	17.0	48.9	25.5	
Paid casual work by pupils causes pupils to repeat class	F	10	12	11	3	11	**3.15**
	%	21.3	25.5	23.4	6.4	23.4	
Grand Average Mean							**2.86**

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, TA-Tend to agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree, Des-descriptive.

Table 5 shows that 10.6% of the head teachers agreed that absenteeism of teachers causes pupils to repeat class, 17.0% tend to agree, and the remaining 72.3% disagreed. This statement had a mean of 2.00, meaning the head teachers disagreed with this statement. It was also clear that 72.4% of the head teachers agreed that poor parental support for

pupils causes pupils to repeat class, 21.3% were uncertain, and 6.4% disagreed, as shown with a mean of 3.98. This means that the head teachers agreed with the statement. On the issue of girls' pregnancies causing girls to repeat classes, 78.7% of the head teachers agreed, 17.0% were not sure, and 4.3% disagreed. This statement had a mean value of 4.17, meaning that the head teachers agreed with the statement.

Further, 34% of the respondents agreed that poor teacher/ pupil relationship causes pupils to repeat class, 21.3% tend to agree, and the remaining 44.7% disagreed with a mean value of 2.85. further, 10.7% of the head teachers agreed that failure to pay required school levies is the primary cause for pupils' repetition of class, 31.9% were not sure, and 74.5% disagreed. The mean value for this statement was 1.98, implying that most of the head teachers disagreed with the statement. The results also revealed that 8.6% of the respondents agreed that tough school regulations are the primary cause of pupils' repetition of class, 23.4% were not sure, and 68.1% disagreed. The mean value was 2.15, meaning the head teachers disagreed with the above statement.

The findings from the head teachers further revealed that 33.0% of them agreed that the sickness of pupils contributes to pupils' repeat grades, 38.3% were not sure, and 27.7% disagreed, as shown with a mean of 3.09. It was established that 31.9% of the head teachers agreed that lack of school feeding programmes causes pupils to repeat grades, 38.3% were uncertain, and 29.8% disagreed (Mean=3.09). The results indicated that 8.5% of the head teachers agreed that non-participation of pupils in co-curriculum activities causes pupils to repeat grades, 17.0% were unsure, and 74.4% disagreed. This statement had a mean value of 2.09, meaning the head teachers disagreed with the above statement. Finally, 46.8% of the head teachers agreed that paid casual work by pupils causes pupils to repeat grades, 23.4% tend to agree, and 29.8% disagreed with a mean value of 3.15, meaning the head teachers agreed to the above statement.

From the above findings from the head teachers in Table 5, it was clear that there are causes that play a major role in making the pupils repeat grades with an overall rating of mean value of 2.86. The head teachers were of the opinion that girls' pregnancies were the major causes of class repetition by pupils, followed by poor parental support.

The above findings from the head teachers were in agreement with the study findings of Mutegi (2019), who established that pupil repetition was one of the factors affecting internal efficiency in public primary schools in Maara Sub-County. The study established that the leading causes of class repetition were teenage pregnancies, poverty, child labour, inadequate parental support indirect and hidden charges in school. Further, the support pupils get from their parents is linked to lower chances that the learner fails to complete schooling since not all parents are engaged with the education of their learners. Similarly, Rubberier's (1999) study also revealed that pupils whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision-making, also known as authoritative parenting style and, are generally more involved in their schooling and less likely to repeat a class or drop out of school.

6. Pupils' Response to Repetition in Class

The pupils were asked to indicate the number of times they had repeated a class. The findings are presented below.

Table 6: Pupils Response on Repetition in Class

Repeated	Frequency	Percent (%)
Never	14	4.3
Once	94	28.7
More than once	219	67.0
Total	**327**	**100.0**

Table 6 shows that 4.3% of the pupils indicated that they had never repeated a class, 28.7% said they had repeated once, and the remaining 67% said they had repeated more than once. From the responses given by the pupils, it was worth noting that more than 50% of the pupils freely acknowledge having repeated a class. Despite government policy on 100 percent transition, repetition of grades is actively ongoing in most of the schools. Education field officers need to intervene by formulating strategies to eradicate the practice.

7. Pupils Response on Reasons for Repeating

The pupils were asked to indicate the reasons they had repeated a class. The findings are as presented below.

Figure 1: Pupils' response on reasons for repeating

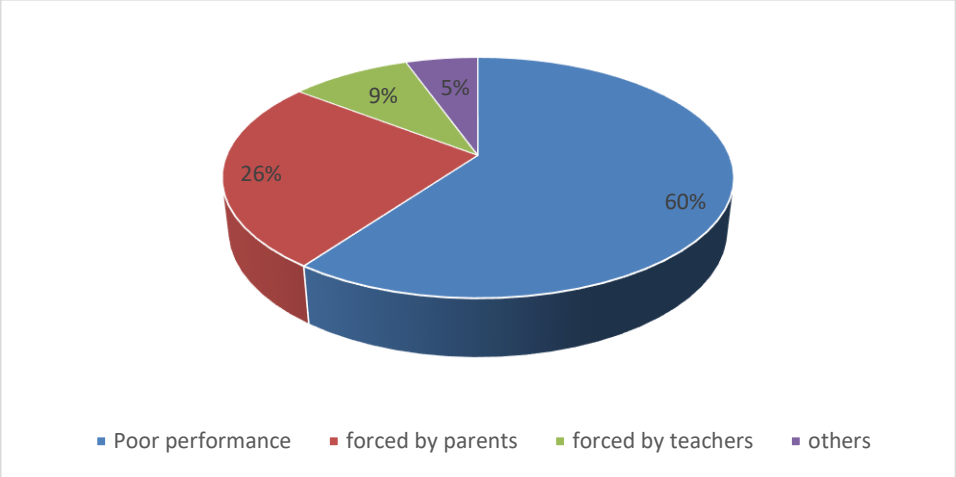

Figure 1 shows that 60% of the pupils said that they had repeated because of poor performance, 26% said that they were forced by their parents, 9% said they were forced by their teachers, and the remaining 5% had other reasons for repeating such as due to parents' advice, due to pregnancies, absenteeism and lack of parental support. The findings revealed that the pupils also repeated in different classes. The above findings

were interpreted to mean that pupils in TransNzoia Sub-County repeat class due to poor performance, and others are forced by their parents, and this is with the intention to improve their examination scores. The findings concur with that of Owino, Ajowi and Onderi (2022) findings that repetition was more prevalent in seventh grade and had an impact on the academic performance of primary school pupils in Alego Usonga Sub-County and the major contributor to the repetition of learners was failure to reach cut-off marks.

8. Repetition Rates of Pupils of 2011 Cohorts

Table 9: Repetition Rates of Pupils of 2011 Cohorts

Class	Frequency	Percent (%)
Class 1	40	12.2
Class 2	40	12.2
Class 3	35	10.7
Class 4	42	12.8
Class 5	38	11.6
Class 6	53	16.2
Class 7	58	17.7
Class 8	21	6.4
Total	**327**	**100%**

The pupils reported that the majority of repetitions in the 2011 cohorts took place in grade 7 among the pupils at 58(17.7%) and grade 6 at 53(16.2%). The repetition trend reduced throughout as the cohort moved to class 8 but increased slightly between class 6 and class 7. This must have been due to head teachers and parents forcing some pupils to repeat in order to improve their results in national examinations. According to the findings of Owino *et al.* (2022), repetition was frequent in class seven and had a detrimental impact on the academic performance of elementary school students. Similarly, Onyango (2020) also indicated that dropout and repetition rates are higher in upper classes, namely standards five to eight, with 10% of pupils from each class failing to move on to the next class every year.

$$\text{Grade repeater rates (average)} = \frac{409}{3353} + \frac{407}{3340} + \frac{363}{3391} + \frac{389}{3036} + \frac{381}{3351} + \frac{515}{3181} + \frac{635}{3589} + \frac{145}{2273}$$

$$= 0.122 + 0.122 + 0.107 + 0.128 + 0.116 + 0.162 + 0.177 + 0.064 = \frac{0.998}{8} = 0.125$$

9. Conclusions

The study sought to assess the class repetition rate for the 2011 cohort of pupils, and according to the teachers' responses, they agreed that poor parental support for pupils caused pupils to repeat class (mean = 4.06). There were other various causes of pupils repeating classes from school, but the teachers considered poor parental support as the

most critical factor leading to pupils' repetition of classes, followed by girls' pregnancies as the main reasons behind girls' repetition of classes.

Similar findings were revealed by 78.7% of the head teachers who agreed that girls' pregnancies led pupils to repeat classes with a mean of 4.17, followed by poor parental support. This shows that the head teachers also felt that these two factors were the main causes of pupils' class repetition. However, according to the findings from the class 8 pupils, they felt otherwise and agreed that poor performance in school followed by the pupils who were forced by their parents to repeat classes as well as those who were forced by the teachers and the least indicated other reasons such as being involved in bodaboda business, pregnancies and lack of parental support. It was established that more than 50% of the pupils freely acknowledged having repeated a class, and the class repetition trend was the least common in standard one and increased as the pupils progressed from one class to another. The average grade repeater rate was calculated and found to be 0.125. This means that for every 1000 pupils, 125 pupils repeat a class.

10. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made from the study:

1) The school administration should abolish forced class repetition from both parents and teachers in primary schools. The school administration should instead implement early intervention programs targeted at pupils showing signs of low academic performance or risk of repetition. These programs could include additional tutoring, mentoring, or personalized learning plans to address individual pupil needs and prevent repetition.
2) Parents should work together with teachers to enforce school discipline among the learners. This will reduce school absenteeism and promote class attendance.
3) The schools should provide comprehensive support services to address the social, emotional, and academic needs of pupils to ensure school completion. This could include access to counselling, mental health services, and socio-economic support programs, e.g. bursary programs to mitigate factors such as poverty, family instability, or trauma that may contribute to repetition and absenteeism.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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